

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1-7 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, and 4-7; and Figures 1-5 are amended by the present amendment. No new matter is added.¹

In the outstanding Office Action, the information disclosure statement filed August 15, 2001 was stated as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and MPEP 609;² Figures 1-5 were objected to; Claim 7 was objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c); Claims 1-7 were objected to for informalities; and Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Regarding the information disclosure statement filed August 15, 2001, which is stated as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98 and MPEP 609, a new PTO Form 1449 providing complete identifications of the references "EP 0 847 169 A2" and "EP 0 758 168 A1" is submitted herewith. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to acknowledge the listed references in the next Official communication.

Regarding the objections to Figures 1-5, those figures are amended to include the legend "Background Art". Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to those figures be withdrawn.

Regarding the objection to Claim 7 under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c), that claim is amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claim 7 be withdrawn.

¹ Support for the amended claims is self-evident from the corresponding originally-filed claims.

² The outstanding Office Action refers to an IDS filed August 27, 2001. As an IDS was not filed on that date, Applicants presume the Office Action is referring to the IDS filed August 15, 2001.

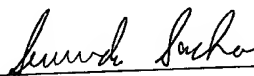
Regarding the objection to Claims 1-7 for informalities, those claims are amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claims 1-7 be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, Applicants thank the Examiner for clarifying, via a discussion with Applicants' representative on March 29, 2005, that the claims should be amended to better conform to U.S. practice; but that the recited features are otherwise clear and apparent. As the claims are amended to better conform to U.S. practice, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-7 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figures 1-5. This sheet, which includes Figures 1-5, replaces the original sheet including Figures 1-5.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets